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ABSTRACT

This document presents the evaluation results for Cicero Public School District #99 (Illinois) in the third year of funding for a special alternative federal grant which provides collaborative teams of bilingual and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) teachers the means to support each other, their students, and the parents of their students through training, collaboration, and development of materials and resources. In the course of this evaluation, teachers responded to surveys, on-site visits were conducted by the external evaluator, and additional data, both quantitative and qualitative, were collected and analyzed. Among the purposes of this project were to increase literacy development for students designated Limited English Proficient (LEP); to develop LEP students' literacy skills in areas of English, math, and science; and to increase the professional development opportunities and instructional repertoires of bilingual teachers of LEP students. The project was successful in meeting its major goal of developing collaborative teams of bilingual and ESL teachers, and of providing materials to teachers and parents. This report did not allow for the collection of data to indicate that literacy skills, science skills, and math skills increased among students whose teachers received the special training and participated in program collaborations. Recommendations include the following: teachers need to continue to help students keep good performance assessment records and to be responsible for collecting data related to their students' achievements in English proficiency and math and science; future staff must be properly motivated and willing to work hard to achieve the goals of the program; the high level of parent involvement needs to continue; and the school district needs to find alternative ways to develop support mechanisms for its teachers. This report is divided into six sections, including historical overview; program description; evaluation methodology/data analysis for year three-plus; results for year three-plus; conclusions and recommendations; and an appendix including the questions asked in the open-ended survey of teachers in 1997-1998. (KFT)

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ED 438 708

EVALUATION REPORT

TITLE VII SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE GRANT BRIDGES:

Collaborative Teaching in Bilingual and ESL

YEAR Three-Plus
1997-1998

DISTRICT #99
CICERO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CICERO, ILLINOIS

U.S. Department of Education
Grant

Evaluator: Sharon L. McNeely, Ph.D.
Northeastern Illinois University
July 1998

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This document was created by Sharon McNeely, Ph.D., Professor of Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois 60625, as an independent contractor with the Cicero Public Schools. In this capacity, Dr. McNeely served as the external evaluator for the Title VII Special Alternative Grant BRIDGES: Collaborative Teaching in Bilingual and ESL, Year Three-PLUS. The report, the formats, and the visuals are the responsibility of the evaluator.

The report could not have been completed without the continued support and input from Paty Welegala, Project Director for this grant. Ms. Welegala was responsible for providing historical information and statistical data related to the background and project development parts of this report. She is not responsible for data developed by the author related to the actual evaluation's methodology and analysis.

Any subsequent modification or use of the report and its data will be allowed only by written permission of both Cicero Public Schools, and the report author, Sharon McNeely.

The evaluator expresses her appreciation to the teachers, staff, parents, and students involved in this grant. They have all willingly given of much time and energy to cooperate with the evaluation process. Without them, this evaluation report would not be possible.

Executive Summary

This document presents the evaluation results for Cicero Public School District #99 of Illinois Title VII Special Alternative Program Grant for the 1997-8 school year. This is the third-plus* year of funding and implementation of the special alternative grant which provides collaborative teams of bilingual and ESL teachers to develop means to support each other and their students and the parents of their students through their training, collaboration, and development of materials and resources. In the course of this evaluation, teachers responded to surveys, on-site visits were conducted by the external evaluator and additional data, both quantitative and qualitative, were collected and analyzed.

One of the purposes of this Project was to increase literacy development for students who have achieved some oral proficiency in English, and therefore are designated Limited English Proficient (LEP). The collaboration of the bilingual and ESL teachers had as one of its purposes the development of the student's literacy skills in the areas of English, math and science. As a part of the overall design, there was also an intent to increase the professional development opportunities and instructional repertoires of billingual teachers of limited English proficient students. There also was a goal to involve parents in the education of their children, and provide some literacy training and develop some materials for parents to use to interact with their children.

This evaluation demonstrates that the project was successful in meeting its major goal of developing collaborative teams of bilingual and ESL teachers, or providing training, and of providing materials for the teachers and the parents. The timing of the grant and the deadlines for

the report did not allow for collection of data to indicate that literacy skills, science skills, and math skills increased among the students who teachers engaged in collaboration. However, data to address this concern will be collected. There was data collected to support the objectives that training was provided, and to support the objectives related to material development. These data indicated that teachers were using new strategies, developing new materials, and receiving training for areas of which they were unfamiliar. These data also indicate that parents received training and materials and resources that they previously had not had available to them.

For the 1997-98 school year, the BRIDGES collaboration project worked with a total of twenty-eight teachers, each of whom had about 30 students in his/her classroom. These teachers were spread across nine schools in the District. The teachers taught in the elementary levels. Over 95% of the bilingual and ESL students of these teachers were of Hispanic ethnicity. The project provided opportunities for bilingual teachers to collaborate with ESL teachers to develop team teaching materials for use in the bilingual classroom, and to develop English and math and science literacy through the use of innovative teaching techniques, and the collaborative models. The project also coincided with the general goals of Title VII and the national education goals.

The funds provided under this project were limited, and did not begin to cover the many expenses which were part of the project. It is commendable that the Cicero Public Schools remained committed to not only meeting the project's specific objectives, but also to meeting its bigger, general goals. To that end, teachers and parents have received ongoing training and support from the District. Part of this training has involved application of the Teaching Integrated Math and Science (TIMS) program in the classroom, cooperative learning, effective lesson planning, human relations, and conflict management. In addition, many teachers have taken advantage of the District's professional development reimbursement plan which provides partial

reimbursement for teachers who attend external professional development activities, such as graduate classes, continuing education workshops, etc. This reimbursement policy has also helped the district in that several teachers have been able to use this to complete ESL or bilingual certification programs.

The training provided directly through the district, and through the reimbursement policy of the district has benefited the project by providing an incentive for teachers to stay in the District and become certified in bilingual and in ESL. The teachers also could use the training to help them prepare a resource book for use by teachers in the District, and for the parents to use to develop math and science literacy at home. These booklets are available for all teachers in the district to use as they prepare lessons. The parent booklet is available for parents to use at home with their children. While the materials were designed to integrate math and science literacy, they also met the needs of a number of parents in providing them with further training in their own use of basic skills. A further indirect outcome was the number of parents who were involved with their children increasing at the schools which had teachers participating in this program.

The LAS is only given once a year, and therefore could not be used in the way it was originally written in the grant proposal. Rather, it was determined early in the evaluation process that an attempt would be made to use performance-based assessments to determine if the students showed a gain in their English proficiency and in their working knowledge of math and science.

The recommendations made herein are made based on the assumption that the District will be applying for future funding for a program continuation, and for developing similar programs. The recommendations are:

1) Teachers need to help students keep good performance-assessment records, and portfolios that are reflective not only of the current skills the student has learned, but also the skills which preceded the mastery. The teachers need to be responsible for collecting data related to their students' achievements in the English proficiency and the math/science areas.

2) Future programs need to continue to find staff who are willing to be part of the program and who are willing to put the time and effort into developing materials collaboratively.

3) The high level of parent involvement needs to continue.

4) The district needs to continue to find alternative ways to develop support mechanisms for its teachers.

This final evaluation report includes information about the design and implementation of this Title VII project, and is divided into six sections which include:

1. Historical Overview
2. Program Description
3. Evaluation Methodology/Data Analysis for Year Three-Plus
4. Results for Year Three-Plus
5. Conclusions and Recommendations
6. Appendices

* This is labeled the third-plus year because of a funding situation in which only parts of the funds were received, and the grant was extended an additional year beyond the initial three year grant.

Historical Overview

Since 1976, Illinois has had mandated bilingual education for limited English proficient children. Schools which enroll 20 or more children of one language background have been mandated to provide appropriate services in a transitional bilingual education program. In 1985, as part of the School Reform Act, the statute required that all children of limited English proficiency be provided special educational services to meet their linguistic needs. As a result of this mandate, demographic shifts in the population, and new methods of determining bilingual program eligibility, the number of students eligible to receive these services has grown enormously.

The Cicero Public Schools are located in Cook County, Illinois. This district, District #99, is an urban-like suburb of Chicago. The students face the problems of gangs, drugs, and violence. They also face the issues of ethnic migration and centration which has resulted in enclaves of various ethnic groups developing. In Cicero, these enclaves allow students to have the richness of their native cultures, but also minimize the need to learn and use English. The District attempts to deal with these concerns by providing bilingual education services, and services which are designed to make students feel safer. Not all of the students from minority backgrounds require bilingual services. Many start in the bilingual program and transition out. Others do not require the services. The District reports that the minority rate for Hispanic students was almost 85% in early 1998. Other minority groups bring the total minority rate to an estimated 90% of the District students.

District #99's bilingual program has grown each year it has been in existence. The program currently serves an estimated 3,600 students who are of limited English proficiency. The growth in this program has varied yearly, but has always been growth. This number currently represents about 33% of the total student population. The current student population consists of students

from at least 20 major language groups. The varieties of programs and services provided is also growing, with over 120 teachers and other employees now serving the LEP students in the district. The District data showed 75 bilingual teachers, 22 ESL teachers, 16 program assistants, and 14 native language tutors. The services this group generally performs are full day self-contained or half day pull-out for full-time bilingual students, pull out for part-time students consisting of ESL with native language tutoring, or pull out ESL only program for non-Hispanic students.

District #99 has been pressed to serve the LEP students. It is a unique district. It serves only .45% of the total school population in the state, but almost 4% of the state's total LEP population. The bilingual program is now the second largest in the state. This is compounded by the fact that almost 65% of the students in the district are categorized as from low-income families. This is compared to the state figure of 31%.

One of the concerns in trying to provide a comprehensive training program for the staff is that in the state of Illinois it is difficult to find fully certified bilingual teachers. Additionally, as District #99's salary is lower than that of neighboring suburbs and of the Chicago Public Schools, the District has been hard-pressed to find and keep qualified staff. Less than half of the teachers who are providing bilingual services are fully certified by the state. Most teachers have provisional certificates which represent a range of years of education and years of experience in the classroom. The Title VII Project Director determined that the teachers serving bilingual students needed a range of supportive and instructional services.

As an outgrowth of the Title VII Project, this Special Alternative Program Grant (SAPG) was developed. This grant sought to specifically meet some of the overall Title VII project objectives

through a program called BRIDGES. The program was designed to serve over 900 students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade, and provide support for bilingual teachers who need it from fully certified teachers who have additional hours in ESL and possess state endorsements.

The district did not have the financial resources to meet its goals for this aspect of the project on its own. Through grant application, it sought funds from the United States Department of Education to assist in the implementation of the BRIDGES program.

The focus of this grant was to meet objectives in three areas, instruction, materials development, and training. This is the third year of the grant.

Program Description

The BRIDGES project was developed to create collaborative teams of bilingual and ESL teachers that would provide the best possible service to the growing non-native English language population and would reach out to parents and other ESL classes. Ms. Patricia Welegala is the year-round Title VII Director for District #99, and the Program Director for the BRIDGES program and this grant. Her role was to coordinate staff development including are ranging for outside consultants, conducting workshops for teachers, providing demonstrations for teams; serving as a resource person to program teachers; serving as liaison between the various training groups and the district; and attending Title VII conferences and reporting back to Title VII staff. This meant that her job included conducting the needs assessment, determining which needs would be best met, organizing and coordinating training, coordinating the liaisons between teachers working on the grant, assisting teachers in preparing their daily lesson plans, visiting classrooms to provide feedback to the teachers, and working with the evaluator to coordinate completion of year two and the start of year three of the grant. Additionally, the Program Director took on the role of working with parents who were part of this grant, and often facilitating parent and student involvement in activities covered under this grant.

In all, the Program Director spent time working with each teacher on both a one-to-one consultation basis and in small groups. The Program Director also worked with the large group of teachers, having monthly meetings to go over innovative teaching ideas, provide inservice training, and allow teachers to share their work with the entire group. The small and large group training included inservices, a graduate level course, and other course work. The training emphasized the development of innovative instructional skills, team-building, E.S.L. methods, foundations for teaching, sheltered instruction, and communication.

The program was designed so that the teachers who were involved in the program had their classes used as part of the program. Therefore, their students directly benefited from the program. The parents of these students also benefited, because they had the opportunity to be involved in the parent classes which included English and family math.

The program was designed so that Title VII funds were used to subside ESL teachers' salaries, pay for after school planning time, provide for training for teachers and parents, and pay for materials development. The "Bridges" that were created were to provide needed support for the bilingual teachers in their classrooms, thus giving support indirectly to their students. Schedules were developed so that each bilingual teacher's class received the services of an ESL teacher for 30-45 minutes per day. Together, the ESL and the bilingual teacher planned a lesson relevant to the bilingual class instruction, determined their roles, and provided the instruction to the students. The district has a commitment to teach using a program called TIMS (Teaching Integrated Math and Science), sheltered instruction, direct instruction, and cooperative learning. The lessons that were planned were to use these kind of instructional methods while trying to develop English language proficiency by having the lesson be an extension of and directly related to concepts being taught by the bilingual teacher in the core subjects of math and science. The Bridges that were to be created were between ESL and bilingual teachers, between teachers and students, between teachers and parents, and between parents and students. As the grant was being implemented, it became clear that there were currently not enough ESL teachers in the district to collaborate with all of the bilingual teachers who would be involved with the grant. The District Coordinator for Chapter One agreed to provide funds and staff, and a minor revision was made in the program, with some Chapter One teachers being added to serve as collaborators with bilingual teachers. In some cases, these collaborations were one-on-one. In other cases, the Chapter One teacher and the ESL teacher jointly collaborated with the bilingual teacher.

There were six program objectives written into the grant. The two instructional objectives were:

1) English: Students will demonstrate a pre/post gain of at least 25% in English proficiency as determined by the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) (herein called Objective #1).

2) Math/Science: Using portfolio and performance-based assessment, students will demonstrate a working knowledge of math/science concepts selected from the bilingual curriculum and integrated into the ESL program (herein called Objective #2).

These instructional objectives were long-term objectives, and were not readily assessable. The LAS is given yearly by the District. The District is starting the use of portfolio assessment, but has not used them long enough to have established criteria for some items to be placed in the portfolio, and has not dealt with concerns for fairness, reliability, and validity. The Project Director sought to deal with these concerns by inservicing the staff on alternative assessment practices, and providing other trainings related to instructional processes. The Director worked with teachers to determine their strengths, learning styles, and communication strategies. Team-building sessions were developed, and in addition to training on lesson planning the Director met with teachers to design lessons. This was followed by insuring that teachers received TIMS training, and had the opportunity to participate in graduate level courses through a local university. The Director served as a resource person, and tried to monitor that the pairings of an ESL teacher with a bilingual teacher involved one of three collaborate models. The Director conducted clinical observations of classroom performance, and helped teachers understand how particular classroom behaviors might be directly tied to assessment results.

Another part of the grant included two materials development objectives. They were:

1) BRIDGES staff will prepare a resource book containing guidelines, strategies and sample activities for implementing team teaching of ESL in the bilingual classroom (herein called Objective #3).

2) BRIDGES staff, through the Parent ESL classes, will prepare a resource book for parents and their children with strategies and activities to be used within the family to develop language through math and science (herein called Objective #4).

Teachers who were unfamiliar with specific aspects of materials development were trained in how to prepare a resource book, and how to implement team teaching. The process of developing the resource book happened throughout the year, as various resources and samples became available to the teachers, were piloted, and then were infused into the curriculum. The booklets that were developed were organized by the teachers and made available for other teachers to use in their lesson planning. Part of this development necessitated the sharing and teaming of the ESL and the bilingual teachers. It also meant that teachers get together and share ideas for the development of their resource areas both for teachers and for parents. The development of the Parent ESL booklet also required that teachers collaborate with each other and with parents as they developed materials which parents could and would use with their students/children at home.

There were two training objectives for the grant. They were:

1) BRIDGES teaching staff will demonstrate successful implementation of one of the following collaborative models: 1) Partners Through Participation; 2) Partners through Instructional Support; 3) Partners Through Team Teaching (herein called Objective #5).

2) BRIDGES ESL parent participants will demonstrate increased involvement in the education of their children in one of the following ways: joining the PTA, volunteering in their child's

classroom, joining the Parent Advisory Council, developing parent support groups (herein called Objective #6).

One of the components related to training the staff meant that the staff have the opportunity to not only learn about the various collaborative models, but also have the chance to use them. The Director provided information about the models to the teachers. This information was supplemented by having the teachers try the different models and indicate which choices they were making for progressing in the collaboration process.

The way that the grant was set-up meant that there was little direct control over what any parents did or how they were linked to the grant. The Director trained teachers to try to get students to involve their parents in the schooling processes. They also recognized that it might take some time before there was a connection between attending a parent training session and becoming involved in the schooling processes.

Evaluation Methodology/Data Analysis of Year Three-Plus

The evaluation of the Cicero Title VII Special Alternative Program Grant (SAPG) has been designed to assess the extent to which the pre-established objectives of the project were met, as well as to provide qualitative information on how the grant is progressing. The long-term goal is to provide longitudinal data that considers the achievement of students of teachers involved with the grant and compare it with the achievement of students whose teachers were not involved with the grant, but also taught bilingual classes.

The external evaluation included structured interviews, observations, anecdotal reports, surveys, review of videotapes, and analysis of primary and secondary data. This qualitative and quantitative data was used to determine the degree to which the program successfully met its proposed objectives. The results section in this report includes information on data related to the objectives and the other analysis.

This evaluator has served the district by previously evaluating other developmental grants. The evaluator was able to observe classrooms, conduct interviews, and otherwise collect data over an extended period of time. A great deal of data was collected as a result of this evaluation process. The data reported is a summation of the overall data collected for this evaluation.

The various objectives of the program required various methods for assessment. In an effort to efficiently discuss these objectives as they related to the evaluation methodology, the order of the objectives as they were renumbered, will be followed.

Objectives #1 and #2 were related to the student achievement as a result of being in this program. The English objective was that students will demonstrate a pre-/post- gain of at least 25% in

English proficiency as determined by the LAS The math/science objective was that using portfolio and performance-based assessment, students will demonstrate a working knowledge of math and science concepts selected from the bilingual curriculum and integrated into the ESL program. In reality, neither Objective could be totally assessed over the 1997-1998 school year. The District has no central database on its students. Data is kept locally at each school building. There were nine school buildings which had teachers involved in this project. By the time the grant started, students had already had their LAS testing completed, and neither their teachers, or the Project Director, or the evaluator, had easy access to that information. The LAS is only given once a year in the District, or its reliability and validity are jeopardized. The teachers typically do not have access to that information, as it is put in the student's file, which is kept in the school office. Lacking a central computerized system to track the students, there was no way to try to obtain the initial data except to go school by school and try to collect it by going through the student files. Having this data was of no help for this report, as the LAS results for school year has not yet been given and entered into the student's files at the time the report was due.

The portfolio assessment system has been in place for only a few years in the district, and is not completely implemented in all of the classrooms. The year three-plus teachers participating in the grant had some training over the 1997-98 school year in using the portfolios, how to establish fair, reliable, and valid assessments, and how to develop the information needed to have these assessments yield qualitative and quantitative data. The teachers began the process of putting these portfolios into place during the 1994-95 school year, but did not have early year assessments which could act as pre-assessments for the purposes of this grant. A random sample of students from each building was used for this part of the assessments. Portfolios for the selected students were reviewed. The review included looking at cumulative growth over the year, and at specific growth relative to enhancement of English language skills.

Objective #3 stated that BRIDGES staff will prepare a resource book containing guidelines, strategies and sample activities for implementing team teaching of ESL in the bilingual classroom. The assessment process involved looking at the actual materials that were developed, and determining the number and kinds of strategies and activities provided. Teachers completed an oral interview structured survey after they had completed the 1997-1998 school year. The results of this survey were part of the assessment process. Both quantitative and qualitative data resulted from this analysis.

Objective #4 stated that BRIDGES staff, through the Parent ESL classes, will prepare a resource book for parents and their children with strategies and activities to be used within the family to develop language through math and science. The assessment process involved looking at the actual materials developed, and discussing with parents if and how the book was used within the family. This yielded primarily qualitative data.

The grant's Objective #5 was that BRIDGES teaching staff will demonstrate successful implementation of one of the following collaborative models: 1) Partners Through Participation; 2) Partners Through Instructional Support; 3) Partners Through Team Teaching. The assessment process for this involved obtaining data from the teachers, interviewing some teachers, observing in some classrooms, and interviewing the Director, who conducted a clinical observation with each of the teachers involved in the program.

The final Objective (#6) was that BRIDGES ESL parent participants will demonstrate increased involvement in the education of their children in one of the following ways: joining the PTA, volunteering in their child's classroom, joining the Parent Advisory Council, developing parent support groups. The assessment involved interviews with some parents, an interview with the

Director, and consideration of information obtained from teacher surveys. None of the schools involved in the program had kept records reflecting the involvement or non-involvement of parents, based on the classroom assigned to their children. As a result, it was not possible to obtain information directly from the schools concerning the extent to which parts of this objective were met.

Results of Year Three-Plus

The results will be presented as they relate to each Title VII SAPG Objective. Further information deemed appropriate to the program will be presented after the objectives' results are presented.

As stated in the methodology section, not all of the parts of Objectives #1 and #2 of the grant could be assessed at this time. The random sampled portfolios of students who were in bilingual classrooms compared the work samples at the beginning of the school year with those at the end of the school year. Overall, students did show a gain in their math and science learning, and development of more English language skills. On average, the growth was somewhat around that of a standard school year. Children working in native language tended to show more concept growth using native language than when they translated work into English. This is not unexpected among bilingual children in elementary school. ESL students showed similar growth to the bilingual students. Overall, it was determined that the students did show a gain in proficiency of their English language skills by at least 25%. Most showed growth of at least one year in levels of work over the course of the school year.

Additionally, the evaluator obtained LAS scores for all of the students from the district. Looking over the three years of the grant, the evaluator was able to compare the progress of students who have been in classrooms that have grant-involved teachers with the progress of students who have been in classrooms that did not have grant-involved teachers. Comparisons where done using standardized *t* tests for independent samples of students at the various grade levels and comparing classroom mean scores over the various years of the grant. In general, those students who were in grant-involved classrooms usually scored at least 25% better on the LAS. Many of

these students transitioned into regular education classrooms the following year, and then comparative LAS scores were not available.

The BRIDGES staff did prepare resources of activities for implementing team teaching of ESL in the bilingual classroom. Observations in the classrooms, and interviews of the teachers, as well as teacher survey data found that in addition to developing the activities, the teachers felt that they had developed lists of materials and had shared other lesson plans that were helpful to them. Analysis of the data related to Objective #3 showed that the Objective was met.

Parents attended ESL classes, family math classes, and other educational opportunities offered by the District. Some of these opportunities, like other processes in the programs associated with the grant, were supplementally funded by Chapter One monies and other district funds. Over 200 parents attended various sessions of the family math classes. There were parents who were trained to run the family math classes. This group of parents also made presentations to other parents and worked hard to develop new training materials for family math. In all, Objective #4 was met.

Classroom observations were conducted by the evaluator and by the Program Director. Additionally, materials developed by the teaching staff, videotapes of teaching, the teacher surveys, and an interview with the director were used to determine that staff were demonstrating successful implementation of the collaborative models (Objective #5). All of the collaborative models were used. Half of the bilingual teachers reported using the Partners Through Team Teaching Model. Over half of the bilingual teachers reported using the Partners Through Instructional Support Model. Seventy percent reported using the Partners Through Participation Model. The Director and the teachers also indicated that although some teachers started with one

model, they found themselves using another model as time went by, and they further developed their collaborative relationships. The results support that Objective #5 was met.

A random survey of parents involved in the ESL parent training found that Objective #6 was met in that parents reported more involvement at their children's schools by serving on various committees and councils, and by volunteering in the schools, often in their child's classroom. The teacher surveys and the Director's interview support some parents are volunteering in the classrooms, although teachers report that this number is limited as many of the parents do work during the day. This was further evidenced as the various parent trainers found it necessary to provide workshops early in the morning or at night to avoid conflict with parent work hours. In all, it was determined that Objective #6 had been met.

The results related to the above objectives miss presenting some of the rich qualitative data that further supports the success of the program in year three-PLUS. Some of the information obtained is important to the overall grant, and is reported below.

The teachers overwhelmingly said that they found the program to be beneficial for them. They said that they appreciated the variety of workshops that were developed by the Director, and they rated these workshops as excellent. The said that the Director observed lessons in their classrooms and provided them with comments. Most commented that the Director acted as a good resource and facilitator as they worked on the program. They reported that they learned more about the strengths and weaknesses of their own teaching, developed more strategies to use in their classrooms, developed more materials, resources, and units for their use, and were developing more skills for getting along with colleagues. Most teachers reported that they felt that their teams had worked well together, and noted that they wanted the opportunities to

continue to work in teams. Some teachers noted that the program also gave them a chance to know each other, something that there was not time to do during the normal school day.

The grant was initially designed to have ESL teachers collaborate with bilingual teachers in the bilingual classrooms. There are few certified ESL teachers in the district, and many of those that had initially agreed to be part of the grant if it was funded, either left the district, or later changed their minds about taking on the extra work associated with the grant. As a result, there were many more bilingual teachers wanting collaborators than there were collaborators available. The Director dealt with this by substituting ESL teachers with certified Chapter One teachers. The Chapter One teachers served as collaborators with some of the bilingual teachers. In other cases, the Chapter One teacher and the ESL teacher both served to collaborate with the bilingual teacher. The teacher surveys and the observations indicated that this collaboration worked well, and the bilingual teachers reported learning many new techniques as a result of the collaborations, and instituting many new strategies in the classroom. The ESL and Chapter One teachers also reported that they learned new strategies and were pleased to have the interaction with other professionals.

This year, teachers were given special workshops on mentoring, peer coaching, and developing lessons that integrate the building of literacy with the instruction in math and science. The teachers rated these highly, and noted that they felt that this training was valuable for them. They also noted that they liked the workshops in which they learned to observe each other in the classroom, and where they learned to develop specific units to meet the needs of bilingual and ESL students.

Conclusions and Recommendations from Year Three-Plus

The results of this evaluation support that five of the six program objectives were clearly met. The other objective was met to a great extent, and can not be fully measured based on the district's method of handling student data.

The ESL, bilingual, and Chapter One teachers learned to and demonstrated collaborating. They reported an increased use of varied instructional methods with their LEP students, and demonstrated this is in the various lessons that they developed. The teachers reported taking advantage of numerous professional development opportunities provided through the grant and other district funds. The teachers developed materials and resources to share with each other and with other teachers in the district. They also developed materials and resources that were used by the parents.

The parents also attended a variety of training opportunities offered as a result of this grant. These included ESL classes, and family math. They prepared a resource book for parents to work with their children to develop language through math and science. They reported increased involvement with their children's education and with related school processes.

The project was successful in a number of areas, and should be continued with some modifications. The recommendations of the evaluator are based on the assumption that the District will be applying for future funding for the program to continue. The recommendations are:

Recommendation #1: *Teachers need to help students keep good performance-assessment records, and portfolios that are reflective not only of the current skills the student has learned, but also the skills which preceded the mastery. The teachers need to be responsible for collecting*

data related to their students' achievements in the English proficiency and the math/science area.

The District does not have a system for maintaining student information in a central location. Records and other information are kept at the local school. The test data is kept at the local school. That is haphazard and does allow for more errors. The district needs to continue to develop its database capabilities and provide means for coordinators and evaluators to have access to the data, as well as for teachers to have access.

Recommendation #2: *Future programs need to continue to find staff who are willing to be part of the program and who are willing to put the time and effort into developing materials collaboratively.*

This program has been successful, but it impacts only a small number of the overall district personnel and thus a small number of the overall district students. The program needs to continue and expand. More staff need to be found who are willing to be part of the program, and who are willing to put the time and effort into developing the materials collaboratively. It is clear that when teachers collaborate, the quality of the lessons is improved, and the teacher's own professional capabilities are expanded.

Recommendation #3: *The high level of parent involvement needs to continue.*

Without parent involvement, the schools would not be able to function. For this particular grant, the parents who were involved attended family math workshops, may have run these workshops, worked as paid math/science facilitators, or were involved in parent support groups and attended classes. This involvement in their own learning and helping others learn is bound to have an effect on the schools and on their children.

One of the goals of the district is to develop parent effective participation (PEP). The unusually high level of bilingual parents and of low income parents puts many (60-80%) of the district's students at-risk for school problems. One of the ways to potentially minimize this risk is to have

the students' parents involved in the school processes, aware of what is happening in school, and learning new skills and ways to engage with their children in the learning process. The evaluator recommends that the parent training be expanded to include family science, and family literacy classes; and parents be trained to teach these classes.

The investment in terms of overall time and resources to involve these parents is minimal, but the potential outcomes are enormous. If literacy among parents is not built in the district, than it is doubtful that students will have much motivation to build their own literacy. Parents must be given the opportunities to participate in as many different literacy-building events as possible.

Recommendation #4: *The district needs to continue to find alternative ways to develop support mechanisms for its teachers.*

The district needs to work with the Program Director to ascertain the needs for various kinds of inservice training and other support mechanisms, and to find ways to honor the work of the teachers. The collaboration is a good start because of the number of different opportunities offered to the teachers. Another mechanism to provide support could be to provide more aides in the classroom. Aide work could be done by parents, or by pre-service teachers. Other avenues to develop support mechanisms for teachers might include recognition ceremonies, providing books and other items to teachers, providing free supportive counseling to avoid burn-out, etc.

In conclusion, year three-plus of the SAPG was a success, and should be continued and expanded in future years. The District should continue to find ways to build bridges between groups involved with the many aspects of the schooling process. The District should be commended for its innovative, ongoing work in this area.

Summary of Findings With Recommendations Across the Three-Plus Years of This Grant

The evaluator has been involved in evaluating this grant for each of the years that it has been partially or totally funded. Over these four years, the evaluator has visited many classrooms, observed many lessons being taught, interviewed many teachers, reviewed student work and student performance data, talked with parents, and read hundreds of lessons developed by teachers. The compilation of these processes and the data associated with them, has lead the evaluator to develop some overall recommendations for future programs that seek to meet various similar objectives. These recommendations include:

1) *The District needs to expand its efforts to hire certified bilingual teachers instead of provisionally certified teachers.*

The reality of the situation is that provisionally certified teachers typically lack the breadth and depth of knowledge about teaching, curriculum development, and classroom processes that is learned in teacher preparation programs. As a result, they are struggling in the classrooms. Adding the training, such as that provided in this grant, is a valuable connection and resource for them, but typically they continue to struggle. They find it difficult to take their required certification work and teach. When additional burdens are put on them, such as participating in grants, they get more stressed, and report that they feel that they are doing a less-effective job in the classroom, and have less time for personal lives. If the district continues its new initiative to hire appropriately-certified teaching staff, then the chances are increased for active participation and meaningful professional growth from the participation. However, if non-certified personnel are hired, then the District can expect to continue to encounter problems with teacher preparation and implementation in the classrooms.

2) *The Project Director needs to involve more personnel in the delivery of the program.*

Over the years of this grant the Project Director taught courses for the participants, observed the participants in their schools, worked with the participants on their lessons, and served as a resource for them. The Project Director also had other duties for the district, and often had to work with the teachers in various capacities. While few teachers found these multiple roles confusing, some expressed concern that they were not getting varied points of view, and reported frustration that they did not have another person to turn to for processing the information that they were dealing with. The teachers reported that while they had teaching partners, they still relied heavily on district administrative personnel for support. When the support came from primarily one person who has multiple roles, they felt this was a conflict for them.

To remedy this situation, the Project Director needs to take on more management and directing, and do more allocation for various parts of the project to others. There are many district personnel who could serve as teachers, some who could serve as observers, some who could also serve as resources for the teachers. Delegation of responsibility for the range of tasks involved with a grant such as these can only help others grow professionally, and thus strengthen the overall district personnel.

3) *Future grants should have a parent and a community participant who serve in sub-Director roles as part of an administrative team for the project.*

It is clear that the district continues to need to find ways to reach out to parents, and to obtain parental support and involvement. It is also clear that the district needs to find ways to build community understanding and involvement in the schools. A project that involves parents and community will use those people to help build linkages, and thus build the program. Parental and community resources can be linked to the program. Teacher lessons can be enhanced through a better understanding of community, and through using community resources as part of the lesson.

Many of the lessons that teachers developed relied on the larger community, outside of the District, for various types of support. Teachers need the linkages and support from within the District as well as from external resources.

4) Future projects need to actively involve the local public library.

Across the years the teachers reported a reluctance to involve the public library in their classrooms, and thus to rely on the library for any help or support. They report that it is difficult for them to obtain library cards, or for their students to obtain library cards. They also reported that the library did not offer many resources or materials that were pertinent for them, or for their curriculum. Building literacy is everyone's responsibility. The library cannot change its policies and cannot order needed materials if there is no clear knowledge as to what the needs are. The project director needs to take an active role in soliciting involvement of the library in future projects, and in providing clear expectations to the library as to how it can serve as a resource to build literacy among both students and parents in both English and native language.

Additionally, the district is just starting to place technology into the schools. It will likely be several years before the district personnel and students have regular access to computers and other technology. Teachers who lack technology access are hindered in their development and sharing of lessons and implementation strategies. While ideally the teachers should be able to share their lessons and ideas over the Internet, the reality is that they are years from doing that with district support. In the meantime, the local library could serve as a resource to provide the teachers with Internet access to obtain ideas and materials, and as an additional repository to share resources.

5) The District's negotiated policy for classroom size and teacher pay needs to be reconsidered as to how it impacts student achievement.

The District currently has a union-negotiated contract in which teachers reportedly get more pay for taking in additional students above the suggested classroom size. As a result, some teachers agree to take in several more students, and thus make more money. However, class size is very important when it comes to enhancing student achievement, and when it comes to being able to provide individualization that some students need. At the very minimum, those teachers who are not fully-certified, and those teachers who are novices in their field should not be allowed the option of having more students placed in their classrooms. At the very minimum, those teachers who are consistently having problems getting their students to achieve to grade level should continue to be provided professional development opportunities, and should have no option for increased class size so that they can focus on achievement.

6) Future programs need to integrate the use of technology.

As technology is provided to the district schools, and as more teachers have technology available to home, future programs also need to use technology. Teachers should be required to become familiar with technology. The projects should teach and encourage the teachers to word process their lesson plans, to integrate technology into their lesson plans, to use technology to share lessons, ideas, and resources, and to use technology to contact and report to others. The Director should be able to organize a listserv for teachers involved in the program. The program should have a Website within the District, and provide pertinent information for all of the stakeholders. This program serves as an important way to provide district links to the community. As technology is provided to the schools, the district also needs to share that technology with the community. Future projects should, therefore, also have a component for technology access and teaching for not only staff, but also for community members. Literacy and student achievement can only be enhanced if parents are using technology appropriately to learn more math, science, English, etc.

Overall, the evaluator has found that the grant has been successfully implemented. Across the years, the project has been successful in meeting the objectives that were established. The project has the potential of continuing to be successful and impacting more district stakeholders if it is revised and enhanced in future years.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS ASKED IN THE OPEN-ENDED SURVEY OF TEACHERS 1997-1998

1. Please briefly describe your current position.
2. Describe your training and certifications for the position.
3. Which of the Bridges sessions did you attend this school year?
4. What role(s) did you have in the program?
5. What did you do as part of the program?
6. What did you learn as a result of being in the program?
7. Please describe the unit that you developed.
8. Please tell me about the results of your implementing this unit.
9. Please tell me the strengths of the program. How did it enhance you?
10. Please tell me the weaknesses of the program. What would you change?
11. Please describe how, if at all, your contacts with parents may have changed as a result of this program.
12. Please tell me anything else about this program that you feel is important to share.